

**Testimony of Steve Koffroth**  
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**American Federation of State,**  
**County and Municipal Employees**  
**Local 1902**  
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**Introduction:**

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, we thank you for the opportunity to testify before you regarding the security and importance of water in Southern California.

My name is Steve Koffroth and I am here today on behalf of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1902, as our Executive President Robert Reeves was unable to attend.

AFSCME is a public sector Union who represents over 1.3 million public sector employees across the nation.

Specifically, Local 1902 represents the employees and managers of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and other smaller water districts within MWD's service area. In total, we represent approximately 1800 employees and the interests of all water workers in the region.

AFSCME Local 1902 is also a founder and member of the California AFSCME Water Caucus, whose membership includes some of the largest water providers in California, including MWD, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and San Diego City water employees. In all, AFSCME represents approximately 3000 water workers in California alone and substantially more nationwide.

It is encouraging to see such a great effort to address the security of the world's second most important resource (as water is subordinate only to air), and specifically how to achieve a balanced solution that moves the various CALFED stakeholders forward and together.

**Response:**

We have been specifically asked to respond to the question, "What measures or assistance may be needed in the short, mid and long term to improve water security in Southern California?"

We certainly recognize the need and importance of the CALFED program, and we are committed to working with the Congress and the various stakeholders to move the CALFED authorization legislation forward. To that end, we support the following legislative principles to assure a balanced CALFED program:

1. An Effective Governance Mechanism. The legislation should promote creation of an effective governance mechanism, which adequately represents ALL Southern California interests and assures stable and balanced implementation of the entire CALFED program.

CALFED plans and programs discuss the need and importance of involving all stakeholders, and they have brought together many interests in creating a statewide partnership. Indeed, we have been able to reach consensus on a number of issues that will serve to strengthen the security of water. We are concerned however that CALFED has not adequately reached out to all stakeholders, which disregards or otherwise discounts important issues that can and should be brought to the table.

2. Funding for Water Projects. As I said before, water is nearly the most important resource we have. If we cannot assure that this resource is available and reliable, we threaten the lives of millions of residents, and we can do nothing to support future growth. The CALFED legislation must assure that water projects, including those directed at water quality, reliability, and environmental protection, be adequately supported in direct correlation with the importance of this resource to the residents we serve.

3. Careful Monitoring and Development of Water Marketing Principles. This is our highest concern regarding the CALFED plans, and affects important principles that must not be disregarded or unnecessarily placed in a subordinate position. Although this concern may be addressed through effective governance structure, it is important for the legislature, in and of itself, to take proactive steps to stress the importance of and improve the security of water.

Clearly, CALFED's direction has been to investigate methods that will encourage or otherwise facilitate water transfers. In fact, the ROD specifically notes that the plan's success hinges on this issue. We have been concerned that this priority will lead to unnecessarily hasty decisions and place blinders on the long-term outlook of the impacts to all stakeholders.

I have included a copy of the letter we wrote to CALFED, which outlines some of these concerns. So far, we have seen few, if any, method or means to address these issues.

As we have seen recently with electricity, lack of long-term planning or disregard of the long-term impacts of resource supply, lead to tremendous instability and insecurity -- thereby negatively impacting the public we serve. Aside from water price and availability, the potential impacts created by water transfers include: increased agriculture prices, farm worker job losses, public sector job losses, loss of suppliers, sprawl and environmental hazards, political accountability and stranded infrastructure and personnel costs.

Although the EWA and other transfer processes may help to address supply issues, they must not be implemented or developed without adequate input from all affected parties and due regard to all the possible impacts.

4. Continued Study and Research. The legislation should provide assurances that continued research and study are performed so that any water-related decisions are based on the most current and best-possible information. This will allow us to develop clear criteria to measure the success of our actions and adjust any portion of these programs in a timely manner.

### **Conclusion:**

Mr. Chairman, your CALFED authorization legislation has created a great opportunity to address resource

management not only in California, but Nationwide.

We now have the potential of moving along a path where California doesn't have to choose between the environment and the economy.

We at AFSCME are dedicated to working with you, Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, and all others in developing and implementing a workable and balanced CALFED Bay-Delta program.

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